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JOSEPH SALVADOR.

JEWISH MERCHANT PRINCE WHO CAME TO SOUTH CAROLINA

He Raised a Million Pounds for the
British Government at Two Hours'
Notice and was Held in High Es-
teem in England—English Histo-
rians Know Nothing of his Later
Career, which is Fully Revealed in
the Records Here—He Came to this
State, where he Owned 100,000
Acres of Land, and, After a Resi-
dence of Two Years, Died in
Charleston, at the Age of 86—He
was the Uncle and Father-in-law
of the Patriot Francis Salvador.

in 1745

(By Dr Barnett A. Elzas, Rabbi of K. K.
Beth Elohim.)

Before proceeding with my narrative I would again like to explain to my readers that I am at the present time merely printing a portion of my notes. These notes running as they do into thousands of folio pages, had become so unwieldy by reason of their bulk, that I thought it well to put at least a part of them into shape, so that I could handle them to better advantage in future. My correspondence, too, in many quarters, has been quite extensive, but much information that I expect to obtain is not yet in my possession. Till now I have dealt almost exclusively with the records existing in South Carolina. There is not much material outside of this State, but I hope that before writing my story in detail I shall have had access to several records in family Bibles, which are of historical interest and which are in the possession of people who no longer live here. These records will help to fill in the details of family history when of special interest, though their absence will not be of any

vital consequence. I would mention, too, that in my list of Charles Town Jews who rendered service to the Revolutionary cause I purposely took no note of those newcomers from Savannah in 1779, some of whom had seen service in Georgia.

My article to-day will be devoted to a man whose career was a most remarkable one and in whose latter end pathos and tragedy were largely commingled. I refer to Joseph Salvador, the uncle and father-in-law of Francis Salvador, a prince among men, as he was a prince among merchants, and who, overtaken by misfortune, came to Charleston when 84 years of age and who died here some two years after his arrival.

We are mainly indebted to Picciotto for our knowledge of the family of Salvador. Of the later history, however, that writer knows nothing. I shall again let Picciotto speak for himself and supplement his account by the facts revealed in our records. Here, then, is his story. It would be a pity to spoil it by presenting it in a mutilated paraphrase:

"Among the most distinguished families of that Congregation during the eighteenth century, (the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation of Bevis Marks, London,) we must mention the family bearing the name of Jessurun Rodrigues. They had originally come over from Holland, bringing with them considerable sums of money, which they invested principally in commerce, and they ranked as merchant princes among the Jews. The most noted scion of that lineage was Joseph Jessurun Rodrigues, to whom we have already adverted by the appellation of Joseph Salvador, under which guise the world knew him. He took a leading part in the affairs of his Synagogue and he was ever to the

fore when the sufferings of poor humanity were to be relieved. He was president of the Congregation, and one of the most efficient members of the original Committee of Portuguese Deputies. Notwithstanding the extensive financial and mercantile transactions in which he was engaged, he devoted a portion of his time to the improvement of the condition of the needy. He not only gave largely to all existing institutions, but was ever seeking new plans for conquering the hydra-headed evil of pauperism. Now he would help to establish a new society, like that intended to assist Jewish young men in earning their livelihood by hard work, and which, unfortunately, was unsuccessful. At another time he would be found asking permission of the Wardens to enter into a speculation on behalf of some deserving families in humble circumstances. He was always a liberal donor to the necessitous. Joseph Jessurun Rodrigues was a partner in the well-known house of Francis and Joseph Salvador which, after the death of Sampson Gideon, repeatedly negotiated loans for the British Government. We cannot tell at precisely what period the name of Salvador was first adopted, but certainly it must be in the early part of the last century, though it does not occur in the Synagogue registers until about 1760.

"Personally, Joseph Salvador, to style him by the most familiar designation, was popular, and enjoyed considerable repute among Jew and Gentile; albeit, when he appeared in a theatre on one occasion after the passing of the Naturalization Bill in 1753, he and his party were hooted, and were constrained to withdraw, to the utter disgrace of the civilized and Christian audience. The principal part of his career was accompanied by unbounded prosperity. He had vastly increased the

wealth he had inherited, and he was the first Jew who had been appointed Director of the East India Company. He constructed a handsome house in White Hart Court, Bishopgate street, which bore until recent times, if it does not still bear, his name; and in the N. E. corner of one of the cellars may yet be seen the foundation-stone, with an inscription laid upon it by his daughter, Judith Salvador. He also was the owner of a country residence, with an extensive park, at Tooting.

“Joseph Salvador was less fortunate in his latter days. Misfortunes began to befall him. He lost heavily in consequence of the earthquake at Lisbon, he holding much property in various shapes in that city, though this did not appear to affect him much. It was the failure of the Dutch East India Company that brought ruin on him, and that proved almost a calamity to many of the rich Portuguese Jews of England and of Holland. This disaster was a great blow to those communities, from which they found it difficult to recover. As for Joseph Salvador, he never raised his head again. All his available property in Europe little by little disappeared; and his last days were spent in obscurity. The family were still possessed of some tracts of land in America, which were in charge of a steward. A nephew of Joseph Salvador, Francis, determined to undertake a voyage to the new continent. It is said that Mrs Joshua Mendes Da Costa, a daughter of Joseph Salvador, gave up a part of her marriage settlement to furnish funds for the expedition. Francis started to retrieve the family fortunes. In due course letters came advising his safe arrival to the new continent, and announcing his intention of seeking his property. He never wrote again. A long silence ensued, and then it was reported that the unhappy Salvador

had been murdered and scalped by Indians!

"It is related that in 1802 an American arrived in Amsterdam and waited upon Mrs Texeira de Mattos, Salvador's eldest daughter, and offered her \$10,000 to sign a deed giving up all claim on the American property. The lady declined the transaction. In 1812 the stranger once more returned and repeated his offer. He alleged that he was the grandson of Salvador's former steward; that the land in Mr Salvador's time had been a tract of barren forests and utterly valueless; that now it was covered with villages and towns and that he himself had a good holding title thereto. Finally he added that, during the War of Independence, British subjects had forfeited all their rights to property in the United States, and that she could advance no claim whatever to the land. Under these circumstances Mrs Texeira De Mattos, who was 80 years of age at that time, and who had not the slightest idea as to the State or part of the Union in which the demesne was situated, accepted the sum rendered and signed the required assignment, which thus conferred a valid selling title on the descendant of the steward. The last male representative of the family of Salvador or Jessurun Rodrigues was a member of Lloyd's, and is believed to have died about 1830. In this manner terminated that ancient and honorable lineage." ("Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History," pp 161-4.)

Let us now look at our Charleston records and see what they have to tell us. They will enable us to separate the facts from traditions which, while containing an element of truth, are largely erroneous.

First as to the date at which the name of Salvador was first adopted. The Charleston College is the fortunate possessor of a most interesting document, the

original "grant of arms" from the Herald's College, London, to Francis Salvador, the grandfather of the Revolutionary patriot. This document has been copied by Mr A. S. Salley, Jr, and was printed in the South Carolina Historical Magazine for January, 1902. In his application for this grant of arms in 1744 Francis Salvador states that he is a son of Joseph Salvador, late of Amsterdam, and that he was made a citizen of England, (as Francis Salvador,) in 1719. It is worthy of note, however, that in the records of the old Bevis Marks Synagogue, London, which have been printed in the "Memorial Volume written to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the inauguration of the Antient Synagogue of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews" ("not published—for presentation only,") and a copy of which was generously presented to me by the Haham and the Mahamad of that Congregation, the names of Jessurun Rodrigues, Jacob Jessurun Rodrigues and Joseph Jessurun Rodrigues occur in the lists of members between 1760 and 1764. It would thus seem that the name of Salvador had already been adopted by the family in Amsterdam—possibly even in Portugal in their commercial transactions, while they still retained the original name of Rodrigues or Jessurun Rodrigues in the Synagogue. It is not unreasonable to surmise that Salvador was the Marrano name of the family. And now for the records.

We have seen that when misfortune overtook Joseph Salvador he was still possessed of land in South Carolina, indeed, he was a very extensive land-owner, for he owned no less than 100,000 acres. The history of this land is very interesting.

In the Mesne Conveyance Records, Vol F 3, p 133, we have the deed of Joseph Salvador's purchase of this land recorded. It

is dated November 27, 1755. John Hamilton, late of the Parish of St George, Hanover Square, in the County of Middlesex, but now of Charles Town, in the Province of South Carolina, in consideration of £2,000 sterling, money of Great Britain, sells to Joseph Salvador, of Lime street, merchant, 100,000 acres of land situated at Ninety Six, in the Province of South Carolina. We hear nothing further of this land till 1769, when, as we have seen, Joseph Salvador gives Richard Andrews Rapley, then on his departure into foreign parts, his power of attorney to look after his interests in South Carolina and to sell some 45,000 acres. (F 4, p 243.) The records show that Rapley succeeded in disposing of a good portion of this land.

The first transaction on record occurs after the arrival of Francis Salvador in South Carolina. In Vol O 4, p 12, we have a mortgage recorded (I erroneously referred to this as a simple conveyance in my last article) from Joseph Salvador per Rapley to Francis Salvador, of 5,160 acres of land at Ninety Six. It is dated May 31, 1774, though the transaction was concluded before Francis Salvador left England, in October, 1773. On October 29, 1773, Joseph Salvador per Rapley sells to Abraham Prado, Francis Salvador's step-father, 1,062 acres for a consideration of £2,124, lawful currency of South Carolina. (F 4, 191.) On the same date he sells to Abraham Prado, 1,638 acres more. (F 4, 200.) On May 16, 1774, he sells to Francis Salvador 921 acres. (M 4, 286.) On May 24, 1774, he sells 1,480 acres to Mathew Edwards. (M 4, 358.) On June 20, 1774, he sells to Andrew Williamson 1,795 acres. (M 4, 362.) On February 23, 1775, we have seen that Joseph Salvador conveys to Rebecca Mendes Da Costa 20,000 acres of land, to satisfy a judgment which she had obtained against him. (T 4, 1.) On March

31, 1775, he sells to John Lesley 450 acres. (Z 4, 286.) On December 8, 1777, he sells to Nicholas Eveleigh 3,022 acres. (Y 4, 236.) On April 13, 1778, he sells to Benjamin Mitchell 300 acres. (Z 4, 282.) On April 29, 1778, he sells 1,480 acres to Nicholas Eveleigh. (Y 4, 238.) Also another tract of 3,900 acres, (Y 4, 241,) and a third tract of 1,048 acres. (Y 4, 243.) On October 6, 1779, he sells to John McCord 500 acres. (K 5, 57.) On November 3, 1779, he sells 1,013 acres to Thomas Sanders. (N 5, 201.) The last recorded deed is dated April 21, 1783, when Joseph Salvador, "having occasion for the sum of £1,000, mortgages his plantation, "Cornacre," of 5,160 acres, to William Stephens, of Lime street, London, Packer." (N 5, 81.)

In 1783 Joseph Salvador was still in London. All his transactions till now have been made per Richard Andrews Rapley, his attorney. He had been living on the money he obtained from the sale of his lands in South Carolina—comparatively little in truth—but it is pleasant to know that he must have had enough to live on comfortably. As we have seen he had till now disposed of about half of his property. He was still possessed of some 50,000 acres of land.

In 1784, when Joseph Salvador was 84 years of age, he came to South Carolina. On April 3, 1784, there is a deed recorded in Charleston of Joseph Salvador, "now of Ninety Six District," revoking his former letters of attorney to Richard Andrews Rapley. (K 5, 135.) It is surely pathetic to think of a man at his time of life coming to a new world to seek the wreckage of his former fortune. He did not remain long, however, at Ninety Six, for on August 9, 1785, we find a power of attorney recorded from William Stephens to Joseph Salvador, "now of Charles Town." (S 5, 143.)

Of his life and doings in Charleston we know nothing, for the records are silent. We should indeed like to have known something of how he spent the last months of his life. Let us hope that he spent them happily. He did not live long after his arrival here. In the Charleston Morning Post and Daily Advertiser of Saturday, December 30, 1786, there is the following notice of his death:

"Yesterday died, JOSEPH SALVADORE, Esq; aged 86 years. He was formerly a most eminent merchant in England, being one of those who furnished that Government with a million of money in two hours' notice, during the rebellion in the year 1745; and likewise was one of the greatest landholders in this country.' "

Joseph Salvador is buried in the old Da Costa burial ground at Hanover street. He rests next to his friend, Isaac Da Costa. Here is all that is left of the inscription on his tombstone, the dashes showing where the edges of the slab are broken:

—cred to the memory o—
Isurune Rodrigues other—
—oseph Salvadore of Coron—
Fort 96 in the Province of
Carolina and late of Tooting
in the Kingdom of Grate B—
he was one of the Elders—
of the Portugeuse Jewish—
He likewise was F. R. S.—
Governor of several Hos—
He was a respectable—
bearing misfortunes with—
& resignation to the will of—
Almighty God trusting in h—
Departed this transitory lif—
Eve of Sabath 8 of—
5547 which answers—
of December 1786—
May his soul enj—

Thus died this "representative of generosity, kindness and courtliness," as Pic-

ciotto calls him. His will made on October 7, 1782, whilst he is still in London, is recorded here in the Probate Court (Wills 1786-1793.) He bequeathes all his real estate in Great Britain or elsewhere, together with his plantations, etc, in South Carolina, to his daughters, Abigail Salvador, Elisebah Salvador, Sosannah, otherwise Susannah Salvador and William Stephens, of London, packer. In addition he gives £1,000 to each of the above named daughters. He leaves £100 in trust to William Stephens to be paid to such person or persons as his daughter, Judith Mendes Da Costa Salvador, wife of Mr Joshua Mendes Da Costa, shall appoint by note or writing, or in default of such direction, to herself for her own and separate use. He also leaves to her an annuity of £50 a year. He leaves to Sarah Salvador, widow of Francis Salvador, Esq, £10 and £100 to William Stephens. To his grandson, Jacob Salvador, he leaves £100, when he becomes 21, and to his granddaughters, who may be living at the time of his decease, £200. He leaves £100 to the Portuguese Jews' Synagogue of the city of London. The residuary estate is to go to his daughters.

In a codicil made at Charleston on November 11, 1786, he adds "his worthy friend Joseph Da Costa" to the list of his executors." He leaves to him in trust £100 sterling "to pay the same to the Portuguese Congregation in the City of Charleston, known by the name of Beth Elohim Unveh Shallom, or the House of the Lord and Mansion of Peace," and to Mr Gershon Cohen £20 sterling for the German Jewish Congregation in the City of Charleston, known by the name of Beth Elohim, or House of the Lord. I believe that there is a mistake here and I shall refer to it again in my next article. To

his clerk, Michael Hart, he leaves £100 sterling.

There is another codicil added on December 27, 1786. Joseph Salvador is on his death bed. He cannot sign his name any more, but makes his mark. It reads as follows: "Fifty pounds more to Mr Michael Hart, my clerk; twenty-five pounds to Mrs Jane Davis; twenty pounds to Mr Charles Brown and a hundred pound to Mrs Sary Da Costa, widow."

The subsequent history of the Salvador estate, is somewhat uncertain. Picciotto's story of the American's visit to Mrs Texeira De Mattos is probably apocryphal. It is strange that Joseph Salvador does not mention her in his will. The story is highly improbable for reasons that are self-evident. We know, however, that there was considerable litigation in after years about those lands, which have always been known as "the Jews' lands." It is impossible to ascertain the details today, for the records of Abbeville County, in which Ninety Sixty was formerly situated, were burnt many years ago. The late Judge McGowan had a good deal to say on the subject in an article which, I believe, he printed in *The News and Courier*, but I have not the reference at hand.

Thus ends the singular story of the chequered career of a noble philanthropist. We are proud to perpetuate his memory and proud to think that his ashes now mingle with those of our own beloved dead.

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